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A

PAPER

ON

MAHOMEDAN EDUCATION IN BENGAL,

READ BY

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AT THE

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MAHOMEDAN EDUCATION IN BENGAL.

The subject of Mahomedan Education in Bengal naturally divides itself into an estimate of what has been accomplished in the past, and a consideration of what yet remains to be done, with the means of doing it, for the future.

For the first, there is before us the history of the Calcutta Mudrussah, embodying the origin of the first movement made under British auspices for elevating my co-religionists from the condition of listless lethargy and self-abasement, into which they had fallen, when power and sovereignty in the land had departed from their race. The idea was due to that extraordinary man, Mr. Warren Hastings, who, in the year 1781, laid before his colleagues in Council a Scheme for the establishment of a Mahomedan College, in words which I transcribe from his Minute :—

"In the month of September 1780, a petition was presented to me by a considerable number of Mussulmen of credit and learning, who attended in a body for that purpose, praying that I would use my influence with a stranger of the name of Mudjid O'din, who was then lately arrived at the Presidency, to persuade him to remain there for the instruction of young students in the Mahomedan law and in such other sciences as are taught in the Mahomedan schools, for which he was represented to be uncommonly qualified. They represented that this was a favorable occasion to establish a Mudrussah or College, and Mudjid O'din the fittest person to form and preside in it; that Calcutta was already become the seat of a great empire, and the resort of persons from all parts of Hindoostan and Deccan; that it had been the pride of every polished Court, and the wisdom of every well-regulated Government, both in India and in Persia, to promote by such Institutions the growth and extension of liberal knowledge; that in India only the traces of them now remain, the decline of learning having accompanied that of the Mogul Empire; that the numerous offices of our Government, which required men of improved abilities to fill, and the care which had been occasionally observed to select men of the first

eminence in the science of jurisprudence to officiate as Judges in the Criminal and Assessors in the Civil Courts of Judicature, and (I hope this addition will not be imputed to me as ostentation on an occasion on which the sincerity of what I shall hereafter propose for the public patronage will be best evident by my own example) the belief which generally prevailed that men so accomplished generally met with a distinguished reception from myself, afforded them particular encouragement to hope that a proposal of this nature would prove acceptable to the actual Government.

"This was the substance of the petition which I can only repeat from my memory, having mislaid the original.

"I dismissed them with a promise of complying with their wishes to the utmost of my power. I sent for the man on whom they had bestowed such encomiums, and prevailed upon him to accept of the office designed for him. He opened his school about the beginning of October, and has bestowed an unremitted attention on it to this time, with a success and reputation which have justified the expectations which had been formed of it. Many students have already finished their education under his instruction, and have received their dismission in form, and many have been dismissed unknown to me, the Master supposing himself limited to a fixed monthly sum which would not admit a larger number. Besides day scholars, he has at this time forty boarders, mostly natives of these provinces, but some sojourners from other parts of India. Among them I had the satisfaction of seeing on the last New Year's Day some who had come from the districts of Cashmere, Guzerat, and one from the Carnatic.

"I am assured that the want of suitable accommodation alone prevents an increase of the number. For this reason I have lately made a purchase of a convenient piece of ground near the Boitacannah, in a quarter of the town called Podpokur, and have laid the foundation of a square building for a Mudrussah constructed on the plan of similar edifices in other parts of India.

"Thus far I have prosecuted the undertaking on my own means, and with no very liberal supplies. I am now constrained to recommend it to the Board, and through their channel to the Hon'ble Court of Directors for a more adequate and permanent endowment."

But even in the great mind of Mr. Warren Hastings, the higher objects for which education has now come to be valued amongst us, seem to have had neither place nor foreshadowing. For on the practical people he had to address, he urges the encouragement of Mahomedan literature, not only as recommended by the example of the past rulers of India, but also as calculated to supply the want of properly educated officers to discharge the functions of "Judges in the Criminal and Assessors in the Civil Courts of Judicature."

In those days, when our early English masters devoted themselves principally to the pursuit of commercial profit and the collection of revenue, they found occupation enough without interfering in the actual management of the provinces as settled by their predecessors. To the mass of the people the change of Government brought no foreign usages or customs. The Law Courts were left in the hands of the same agency as before. Mahomedan Law and Mahomedan Lawyers still reigned supreme, and a knowledge of Arabic and Persian literature remained as indispensable qualifications for official distinction and success as they had ever been under the Subadars. When, therefore, the Governor General proposed to his Council the means of keeping up a regular supply of learned Moulvies and Kazees, for the legal institutions of the country, he neither exaggerated the objects to be attained, nor in their attainment aimed beyond the bare requirements of the moment. In a Minute, dated January 1785, Mr. Warren Hastings explains them in language which leaves no doubt as to the purpose for which the new College was founded—"It had," he says, "been deemed expedient on maxims of sound policy to continue the administration of the Criminal Courts of Judicature, and many of the most important branches of the Police, in the hands of Mahomedan officers. To discharge with credit the duties and functions annexed to those jurisdictions, it is necessary that the persons who hold them should not only be endued with natural talents, but also that they should be possessed of a considerable degree of erudition in the Persian and Arabic languages, and in the complicated system of laws founded on the tenets of their religion. This species of erudition has for some years past been much on the decline: since the management of the revenues has been taken into our own hands, it has chiefly been carried on by the English servants of the Company, and by the Hindoos, who, from their education and habits of diligence and frugality, possess great advantage over

the Mahomedans in conducting all affairs of finance and accounts. In consequence of this change, the Mahomedan families have lost those sources of private emolument which could enable them to bestow much expense on the education of their children, and are deprived of the power which they formerly possessed of endowing or patronizing public seminaries of learning. The Foujdaree Department, which affords but a bare subsistence to the officers employed in it, neither possesses the means of encouraging, nor holds out a prospect capable of inducing, the sons of the once respectable but now decayed and impoverished Mahomedan families, to qualify themselves for succeeding to the duties of it, by a long and laborious course of study.

"These reflections about four years ago suggested to me the idea of founding a Mudrussah or College for the cultivation of Mahomedan literature in the Town of Calcutta."

To bring this knowledge within the reach of respectable Mahomedan families, whose decay was to be deplored on their own account, as well as on account of the Government, which in those days was virtually based on their alliance and co-operation, the Mudrussah rose into existence; and for upwards of half a century furnished the bulk of those Mahomedan Law Officers, who, whether as the paid servants of the State, or as the legal advisers of all ranks of the population, have been intimately associated with the judicial administration of the Lower Provinces.

For the support of the Mudrussah, ample revenues were given. At the beginning, certain lands in the 24-Pergunnahs were made over, which are known to this day as constituting the Mudrussah Mehal, but they were subsequently resumed, and the fixed sum of Rs. 30,000 a year was assigned in 1819, which, after repeated declarations by the Home Government, may well be considered as inalienable an endowment as any that could have been established on the rents of broad acres, or the proceeds of funded securities.

This is not the place, nor have I the time, to recapitulate the grounds on which the Governor General set aside the annual income above mentioned for the promotion of Mahomedan Education. It is sufficient to state the fact that the allotment of public revenue took the place of income derived from land, after repeated failures on the part of those entrusted with the supervision of the Mudrussah Mehal to keep its affairs in order,

and after Government had been compelled to resign its proprietary right in the Mehal to a claimant, whose title, as proved after official scrutiny, superseded the gift which had been made of the land to the Calcutta Mudrussah. It should also be sufficient to say that the view taken by successive Governments of India, when pressed to introduce changes into the Mudrussah calculated to divert its funds into channels for which they were never intended, has been opposed to their alienation, on the ground that they had been specifically appropriated, and could not be otherwise applied.

When the controversy between the rival claims of English and Oriental Colleges as the instruments of disseminating European knowledge among the people of India reached its climax a quarter of a century ago, the late Court of Directors, in a despatch dated January 1841, decided that "the funds assigned to each Native College or Oriental Seminary should be employed exclusively on instruction in or in connexion with that College or Seminary, giving a decided preference within these institutions to the promotion, in the first instance, of perfect efficiency in oriental instruction."

For full 25 years or more after its foundation, the Mudrussah continued under exclusively Native management, doing nothing more than, as designed by the founder, providing men learned in Mahomedan law and religion for the Courts of Justice, and keeping up throughout the land in the pious establishments mantained by devout Mahomedans, and in the houses of the wealthy among them, a love of scholarship and letters. The institution soon acquired a strong and effective hold on the affections of the Mahomedan population. Perhaps I am not wrong in saying that, of all the Educational Establishments in Bengal which owe their inception altogether to the English Government, the Mudrussah is the only one that has so entwined itself into the every-day regard of the people for whom it was founded. I know what the old Hindu College and the Medical College have achieved in their way, and the measure of popularity among my Hindu fellow-countrymen to which they deservedly attained, when the justly alarmed prejudices of primeval Hinduism had been clean swept out of the path of progress and enlightenment. But it must be remembered that both those Colleges, in their strictly educational aspect, have moved out of their depths the intelligence and moral sentiment of only a particular class of the Hindu popula-

tion, the richer and more respectable section, who still monopolise whatever the British Government has to bestow on the cause of education in Bengal. To the vast mass of the Hindu population, they barely exist even in name and significance. But the Mudrussah has come to be looked upon by all orders of Mahomedans as peculiarly their own national place of education, and it has given them what they wanted, in the way in which they wanted it. To them it was more than a mere school of literature and science. Their law, which is the great basis of Mahomedan society, there found its reliable interpretation. For many years the learned Professors of the Mahomedan College have, by the common consent as well of the Government and of its highest legal tribunals, as of the community of Islam, been referred to as umpires and arbiters on the most difficult questions of Mahomedan law and usage, and their decisions have been accepted far and wide for the settlement of litigation and the determination of political inheritance. In religion, the Madrassah has always had the reputation of being the stronghold of *Soonnee* orthodoxy—the religion, that is, of the large majority of the Mahomedans of India. The regulations of the College enforced religious discipline among the pupils, and it was ordered that "the Khutteeb or reader of the Koran, and a Mouazzin or crier, shall regularly attend at the Mudrussah, that the students may daily perform such acts of religious worship as are prescribed by the rules of the Mahomedan faith." At stated seasons, the Government defrayed the expenses attendant on the celebration of Mahomedan festivals. It is no wonder then that Mahomedans of all ranks and degrees have ever turned to the Mudrussah with an affectionate and reverent fervour, and may I never live to see the day when, whatever revolutions betide the old College, the Mahomedans of Bengal shall have cause to view it differently.

There is no doubt that during the period the Mudrussah remained under purely Native control, very gross abuses crept into it, and most necessary reforms were effected, when, on the appointment of a European Secretary in 1819, a method was introduced in the course of instruction and in the bestowal of honors and rewards. At the same time a very decided movement occurred outside among the other sections of the Native community for profiting by the inducements held out by the Government to the cultivation of Western literature and science; and it was fitting that the Mudrussah should participate in the career of advancement. An English class was formed in 1826, which was abruptly broken up, but re-formed and organized as an English School in 1829,

ntinuing in existence down to 1853. The following extract is ken from *Kerr's Review of Public Instruction in Bengal*, Part II, age 84 :—"It was at first composed entirely of scholars on the Mudrussah foundation,"—that is, Stipend-holders of the Arabic classes, who, according to the original constitution of the College, were paid to receive instruction in its various studies,—"but," continues Mr. Kerr, "as there were numerous applications for admission from without, the classes were at an early period thrown open to Mahomedan boys in general. As a temporary measure, stipends of Rs. 8 a month were granted to any number of pupils not exceeding 25, who were desirous of learning English. It was also resolved that all who received Arabic stipends should likewise learn English. It was originally proposed that a small fee should be demanded from the out-students, but the idea was abandoned on account of their general poverty. This proposal, however, was subsequently revived." The result of this paying system will be appreciated when I note that in 23 years 1,787 students paid schooling fees amounting to Rs. 3,923, or Rs. 2-7 per head, which gives the contribution of each scholar at one anna and eleven pie per annum, the cost to Government being Rs. 58 per annum. Throughout the history of education in Bengal, I do not think there has been an instance in which the Mahomedan idea that education should cost money to the giver, and not to the receiver, has been more signally asserted.

The condition under which holders of Arabic stipends were bound to attend the English School could not have been strictly carried out, for it happened that in a short time the English School was altogether given up by the pupils of the Arabic College, and was attended chiefly by those who came from outside to learn the little English that was imparted in the Mudrussah. During a period of nearly 25 years, the Junior Scholarship standard was attained by only a very few students. To all intents and purposes, the English School, although held within the premises of the Mudrussah, had neither life nor part in the daily routine of the College itself. The purpose which it was to have served was the inculcation of European principles of thought and action in minds matured by Arabic learning, which, after being thoroughly imbued with the influences of European philosophy, were to have brought forth fruit in a new and vastly improved literature for the Mahomedan world. The conception was truly grand and worthy of the great men who sought with the means at their disposal to give it shape and reality. Besides the establishment of the English School, another means resorted to for creating a powerful impression on the Mahomedan

understanding was the translation of books from the European languages into Arabic and Persian for the benefit of Mahomedan readers. The proposal originated in the year 1823 with Dr. Lumsden, then Secretary to the Mudrussah Committee, and an amusing, if not an instructive, account is given in Mr. Kerr's book of the arguments by which the Government was persuaded to waste a good deal of money in the enterprise. Dr. Lumsden commenced by employing a Moulvie to translate European books for the use of the Mudrussah. He then recommended to the Government, through the Mudrussah Committee, that the translations already made "should be encouraged by offering prizes to those who passed a successful examination in them. This he conceived was all that could be done at present in furtherance of the desire of Government to encourage the study of European science in the College. The more complete attainment of the object would involve the necessity of an application to the authorities at home for the purpose of engaging the services of a competent lecturer, and furnishing the institution with proper apparatus. If a lecturer should hereafter be engaged, it would be necessary for him to make himself master of Arabic and Persian. Dr. Lumsden recommended, in the mean time, the appointment of a Native Translator who had some acquaintance with English.

"Mr. Shakspeare considered that the appointment of a Translator, with a view to the introduction of European science, was highly desirable. A portion of the educational fund could not be better applied than to such an object. The question, however, was yet undecided, whether the Natives could be best instructed in the European sciences through the medium of their own language, or by the previous acquirement of English. In his opinion the former plan was preferable.

"Mr. Martin agreed in the opinion that the translation of elementary treatises was apparently the most eligible method of introducing European knowledge. Judgment would, however, be required in the selection of works to be translated. If it was intended to furnish the Mahomedans with the means of acquiring that knowledge which might best direct their practice in life, and might best qualify them for discharging with integrity and ability all their civil and social duties, he would be disposed to recommend the translation of elementary treatises on ethics and politics, including the general principles of natural and municipal law, rather than of works on mathematical science.

"Mr. Sutherland considered that if they wished to afford encouragement in what are called the exact sciences, they must call to their aid the improved systems of Europe. This must be done by compilations and translations in an Oriental language. These he would encourage rather by premiums offered for work done than by a monthly salary. But in order to impart European notions of moral excellence, or to diffuse a taste for English literature, he thought it would be desirable to encourage the study of English, if such a measure would be acceptable to the students.

"The result was that the General Committee, in a letter to Government dated January 1824, recommended the appointment of a Native Translator on a salary of Rs. 100 a month, as a preparatory step in the diffusion of European knowledge. Government sanctioned the appointment.

"The process of translating European works into Arabic was commenced, but went on but slowly. The first book translated was Brydge's Algebra. After an interval of some years, a single volume of Hutton's Mathematics was prepared for the Press. It soon appeared that the work of enlightening the Natives by this method would be very gradual. The advocates of the system said that more books might have been translated, but this did not alter the fact that they were not translated And then arose the question whether they were translated well—a point not easily determined."

Sir Charles Trevelyan, in his work "On the Education of the People of India," p. 11, informs us that an "Edition of Avicenna was projected at an expense of £2,000; and as it was found that, after hiring students to attend the Arabic College, and having translations made for their use at the expense of thirty-two shillings a page, neither students nor teachers could understand them, it was proposed to employ the Translator as the interpreter of his own writings at a further expense of Rs. 300 a month!"

At a later period (1847), when it was discovered that the Arabic students for whom the English School in the Mudrussah was intended, with but few exceptions, hardly availed themselves of its advantages, another class, called the Anglo-Arabic Class, was formed for the exclusive advantage of pupils from the Arabic Department.

Happily those fancies have been confessed to be impracticable, under which a revolution, as mighty as the awakening of modern

Europe, was to have been brought about among a people so full of belief in their past, as Mahomedans are everywhere found to be, by the study of translations of Hutton's Mathematics, Brydge's Algebra, and the like. These attempts at anglicising the superstructure of the Mahomedan mind over the basis of a half-formed Arabic Scholarship have failed as they deserved to fail, and the failure has left lessons which, having yet been but partially utilised, are worthy of the most serious attention. With the experience of the past for a guide, there is no presumption in making the declaration that no endeavour to engraft upon a strictly Arabic foundation those principles and ideas of European civilization which have developed themselves out of the lives and histories of European nations, can hope to succeed. This would be intelligible enough in the case of any people, but in that of the Mahomedans of India, the explanation is so obvious, that in offering it, I beg to disavow any intention of proclaiming a discovery.

In a paper written some time in 1861 for the Hon'ble Sir John Peter Grant on the subject of the Hooghly Mudrussah, I pointed out that educational efforts, to be of any avail among the Mahomedans of Bengal, must start with a due appreciation of the fundamental constitution of Mahomedan society. With your permission, I will read a portion of the remarks I made on that occasion:—

"At this place it becomes necessary for me to notice the classes into which Mahomedan society is divided. One of them is the learned, and the other the worldly class. The members of the first are famous for their love of learning, generally for its own sake. They think nothing of begging their bread to great distances, even to Arabia and Egypt, to study their favorite Arabic. They indeed may be said to literally obey the precept of the Prophet:

أطلبو العلم و لوكان بالصين

i. e., 'Pursue knowledge even to China.' They are generally poor, but in consequence of this disinterested and almost heroic love of learning, they are very much respected in society, and wealthy members of the worldly class take pride in forming connections with them. It is for the sole benefit of this class that private endowments are generally founded, and whatever religious merit there is in giving education is in giving education to this class. It is this class which supplies priests to the Mahomedan community, and altogether exercises great influence over it. But

many of its members have neither means, nor inclination, nor motive, for studying the English. And therefore, unless some educational provision from the funds of Hajee Mahomed Mohsin be made for this class, the object of the endower will be disregarded, the Mahomedan community dissatisfied, and the honor of Government compromised.

"The worldly class consists of those who are not anxious for an Arabic education, but would content themselves with sufficient Persian to enable them to transact business and move in society. This class is by far the most numerous, and possessed of wealth and property, including as it does the nobility, the gentry, and the merchants; and it is by this class that the benefits of an English education will be appreciated and sought after.

"In consideration of the above particulars, I beg most respectfully to suggest the establishment of a purely Arabic institution, or rather the retention of the existing one upon an improved basis, for the benefit of those members of the learned class who are undesirous of acquiring an English education, and of an Anglo-Persian School offering extraordinary advantages for the education of the rest of the Mahomedan community."

The matters of fact contained in the above are so well known to every body who has any acquaintance with the Mahomedans of this country, that it is not at all surprising that they were known to and recognised by the late Council of Education, and conduced in an essential degree to the adaptation of their plans for the improvement of the Mudrussah to the ends to which they were directed. In a Minute on the subject by the late Hon'ble John Russell Colvin, dated the 18th May 1853, which is published in the Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal, No XIV, I find the following:—

"A Mahomedan gentleman will teach his son Persian and enough of Arabic to make him fairly master of the composite modern Persian, and this is the education with which he commences when his son is 6 or 7 years of age. This is carried on to the age of from 10 to 12, when those who are of the learned or erudite class, relations of scholarly families, or persons desirous of taking rank as Moulvies, devote themselves chiefly to the Arabic. At this age a Mahomedan gentleman of the present day in Bengal, sensible of the necessity of English for his son's success in life, and not caring that he should be learned in the Arabic language or law, will be ready that his son should apply himself to English, carrying on at the same time his Persian

reading as a becoming accomplishment, and likely to be of benefit to his character. I need not say that there is in the Persian literature much elegant composition, much terse and graceful poetry (which is to the Mahomedans, for the familiar exercise of taste, and as his ready store-house of sentiment and practical wisdom, much what Horace is to us), and many excellent lessons of virtue.

* * * * *

"The conclusion, then, to which these facts seem to me strongly to point is that it is well to organize, in addition to the branch schools in Calcutta, and to the Mofussil institutions open to all persons, a special English education for Mahomedans, and this may be most easily done at the Mudrussah, a place of learning which they regard as devoted to their benefit, and which is held in great respect and repute throughout Bengal.

"Mahomedans now come to the Mudrussah from all parts of Bengal, and they will readily come to it for English and Persian, as well as for Arabic education (that is, for the training fit for an educated gentleman as well as for that of a learned scholar), in cases in which instruction in English may be valued, but in which there may be discouragement from the age of entrance and course of study in the Mofussil Schools. I would then organize an Anglo-Persian Department in the Mudrussah under really competent masters, to which students would be admitted at an age not exceeding 12 in any case. At the age of 15 the lad should determine whether to continue his English studies or to transfer himself to the Arabic classes. It is admitted by every one (and I have consulted every qualified person that I could think of) that the successful conjoint study of Arabic and English is impossible. Those who remain in the Anglo-Persian class will, as a matter of course, give more and more of their time, as they grow older, to their English studies, for the comparatively narrow range of Persian literature will soon be exhausted.

"I should look with much confidence to a considerable diffusion upon this plan of a superior English education among the better classes of Mahomedans. They are becoming quite alive in the districts under the Bengal Government to the value of English as a means of advancement in all departments of business."

The result is the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Mudrussah, which, as far a sit has been worked, has proved a decided success. Year after year it has sent up students for examination

by the officers of the University, many have been entered as under-graduates, two of them have already obtained the degree of Bachelor in Arts, and an impetus of a genuine and lasting character has been given to the study of English among the Mahomedans. It is no small matter for rejoicing that what was feebly, because by false methods, attempted forty years ago, is now on the eve of accomplishment. I do not think it possible for any man to over-estimate the amount of good which is being achieved by the British Government in annually sending forth from the Mudrussah young men of good social connections, well grounded in the elements of English and Mahomedan literature, who have acquired just such a taste of both as to wish for more, and whose influence and example are beginning to permeate through every movement of Mahomedan society. But the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Mudrussah teaches only up to the Entrance Standard, and its under-graduates have either to join the Presidency College, to carry on their studies further in English, and qualify themselves for honors, or to join the Arabic Department of the Mudrussah and select Arabic for honors. The latter course can land them only in the half-and-half results, of which the past failures in the Mudrussah afford striking instances. As students exclusively of Arabic, they lose the benefit of the little English training they have acquired, for the Mudrussah has no means of long continuing their instruction after the Entrance Standard has been attained; and it does not take much time to obliterate from their minds whatever little English they have learned. In the Presidency College, they are equally unfortunate in regard to the classical languages open to their choice, in preparing for the L. A. and B. A. Examinations. I need hardly remind you that in both these tests, English being the fixed language, the optional ones are—Greek, Latin, Sanskrit; Hebrew, and Arabic. The Mahomedan student in the Presidency College, it will be confessed, is at an immense disadvantage, compared to his Hindu fellow candidates, in keeping up and improving his knowledge of the Arabic, which is to him what the Sanskrit is to them. I cannot for a moment believe that it can enter deliberately into the counsels of the British Government to treat the different sections of the Indian population, except on a footing of the most perfect equality. If some of them seem to have derived from the wise liberality of Government advantages not yet extended to others, it seems to me, that, in respect of the former, the British Government have, more clearly and more readily than in regard to the latter, been made to understand the precise thing wanted to be done and how

it was to be done. We have now arrived at that stage of intelligence in which we know the exact requirement of the moment. What is wanted is to place the Mahomedan in educational advantages on the same footing as the Hindu; and the way to do so is to add college classes to the Anglo-Persian Department of the Mudrussah, and elevate it to the rank of at first a High School, and then of a College. In the first class of this Department, Arabic has already begun to be taught. After entering the University, further proficiency in Arabic will be secured to the aspirant for honors, by the means already existing within the Mudrussah walls for the highest instruction in Arabic. The addition of advanced classes in English will complete the machinery for fulfilling the conditions of the University Course for the attainment of the highest honors in English.

It is beside my present object to speculate on the changes which must be introduced into the Arabic Department of the Calcutta Mudrussah, in order to give it the place among the educational institutions of the country which its importance demands. That it does not occupy that place needs no demonstration, nor would it suit any practical end to discuss the causes of its failure. The well-founded impression is, that it has never had fair play ever since it ceased to be a mere nursery for Mahomedan Law Officers and Judges, and was left to itself to prove how it best could exhibit its usefulness as an adjunct to the educational progress of the age. I would draw your attention to the bare injustice of expecting the Calcutta Mudrussah, with its subjects of instruction and the modes of instruction in them unchanged for nearly a hundred years, to take a part with the latest of model academies in contributing to the growth and extension of thought essentially modern and European. But because it has been unable to do so, I have heard it seriously argued whether the Mudrussah should not be broken up altogether and its funds applied in other directions more likely to yield fruit meet for acceptance. I have watched, but have failed to observe even of late a disposition to be more equitable, and the views of the writer of an excellent article in the August number of the *Calcutta Review* may be taken as representing the point at which opinions among those European gentlemen who are at all capable of forming one on the subject, have arrived. Although he adds to the difficulty of the argument by mixing up the question of the Hooghly Mudrussah, which is maintained altogether out of a private Mahomedan Endowment, with the Calcutta Mudrussah, which is supported by an endowment from the State,

there is much in what he says that is valuable for my purpose. He has two problems before him—first, how to deal fairly by the bequest of Mahomed Mohsin, the founder of the Hooghly Mudrussah; and secondly, how to devote the income of the Calcutta Mudrussah, after confiscating it, to the good of the general public. The first, as the writer in the *Review*, with most praiseworthy candour allows, can only be done by following out what may most reasonably be presumed to have been the intention of the testator, *viz.*, the establishment of a College for the exclusive benefit of Mahomedans, and to this end, the reviewer is willing that there should be a well-endowed and well-conducted Mudrussah at Hooghly, towards the support of which the major portion of the proceeds of Mahomed Mohsin's legacy should be used. He would also have an Anglo-Persian School at Hooghly like the one attached to the Calcutta Mudrussah, but supported like the Hooghly Mudrussah out of the Mohsinecah funds. The English College, kept up for the Hindus, so largely fed out of the same source, would be disconnected from it, and be maintained at the expense of Government; it would receive pupils from the Anglo-Persian School at Hooghly, after these had been entered on the rolls of the University. Lastly, he would abolish the Arabic Department of the Calcutta Mudrussah, keeping on only the Anglo-Persian Department, and leave it optional to those desirous of acquiring a knowledge of Arabic to proceed to Hooghly and learn it in the Hooghly Mudrussah. The reviewer has an alternative scheme, which is to keep up the Calcutta Mudrussah, with its Anglo-Persian Department, but to do away with the Hooghly Mudrussah, and spend five hundred Rupees a month out of the Mohsinecah Endowment towards the maintenance of a hundred Arabic scholars on Rs. 5 a month each at the Mudrussah in Calcutta.

In either case, the abolition of one of the Mudrussahs is recommended. With my very strong reliance on the good faith and wisdom of the Government, I do not apprehend that the suggestion one way or the other is likely to be carried out. In regard to the Hooghly Mudrussah it simply cannot be done by the Government, which is the principal Trustee of the estate; in regard to the Calcutta Mudrussah, the measure would involve such serious consequences that it were best that the matter for the present at least were left alone. But the point would never have been put forward for discussion, if the Calcutta Mudrussah in its Arabic Department had received the care and attention which other Oriental Colleges in India, supported out of the public revenue, such as the Sanskrit

Colleges at Poona in the Deccan, and at Benares in the North-West, have undoubtedly obtained. If European modes of teaching and discipline had been as sedulously introduced into the Arabic classes in Calcutta, as they have been into the Sanskrit classes at Benares, by men like Dr. Ballantyne and others who have trod in his footsteps, there would have been no issue as to whether the money spent on the Mudrussah was repaid by an honest amount of work accomplished. The thing would be far from impossible, if a scholar of Dr. Leitner's ability and learning were entrusted with the task of re-organizing the entire system of Mudrussah education and of personally carrying reforms into effect.

As to the absolute necessity of pushing forward the advances already made in giving an English education to the Mahomedans of Bengal, there is happily no difference of opinion. The most obvious and readiest plan is the one I have ventured to suggest, *viz.*, the elevation of the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Mudrussah to the status of a College. The prevalent notion seems to be that after passing the Entrance Examination, it is quite enough for a Mahomedan student to have the privilege of joining either the Hooghly or the Presidency College,—and this mistake seems to be committed even by the able and intelligent writer in the *Review*, who is fully conscious of the prejudices of the better class of Mahomedans against the association of their children with those of other creeds. He says—" The larger and what are styled the worldly class of Mahomedans, in order properly to fill their place in society, must learn Persian; if. therefore, they are mixed in the general department with students of other creeds, either all those students must be compelled to study Persian, or the Mahomedans must be placed at the disadvantage of having to compete with their fellows, handicapped with the weight of an additional language. Consequently even the school for the worldly class ought to be restricted to Mahomedans, though the pupils could not expect to be supported while learning. It is no doubt also true that the more respectable and consistent Mahomedans do not like to mix in school with other religionists, and considering that all the most conscientious persons in England and Ireland object to mixed education, we cannot be surprised if conscientious Mussulmans are of the same way of thinking."

The above applies to what is called "the worldly class" of Mahomedans, who are willing to learn English; and it does not seem why the sentiment, which is to be treated with tenderness and respect before the University Entrance Standard is passed,

could be ignored altogether after it. I should think that if the pride, or self-respect, or prejudice of Mahomedans be worth while conciliating, so far as to give them a school for the education of their children in the elements of European literature, a College for their exclusive benefit, requiring the expenditure of a few hundred rupees more, would not seem too great a sacrifice in the presence of the priceless effects to be produced. But the real issue of the moment opens out far higher considerations than those concerned in making a concession to a feeling which, after all the indulgence with which it is regarded, is looked upon by Englishmen as a weakness. Mahomedan education can never cease to have a strongly marked feature of political interest, which will force itself on the notice of all who desire to make the enlightenment of the Indian races the handmaid of loyalty and devotion to the British power The current of public opinion on Indian politics, the orthodoxy of Indian statesmanship, the small talk of small men on almost every point connected with Indian administration, would undergo a change, if by any effort of the fancy it were possible to think and speak of the Mahomedans of Bengal as an English educated class. But what even the imagination dare not now conceive can be accomplished in time by means already at the command of the Government. I beg you to bear in mind that it is no longer open to debate whether respectable Mahomedans are willing to have their children imbued with the principles of a sound healthy English education. The wide gulf of time during which it remained doubtful has been passed over. There is the quickening of a desire for initiation into the blessings of European civilization in the Mahomedan mind which is manifested, it may be feebly here and there, but nevertheless with sufficient distinctness and character to indicate the birth of a life which needs growth and development.

The addition of a few College classes to the Anglo-Persian Department of the Mudrussah will cost money: not all, however, at once. All the four classes which generally compose a Government College on this side of India need not be at once represented; they may be laid on as gradually as they become necessary. An attempt, as I understand, has already been made in the Anglo-Persian Department, with its present establishment of teachers, for carrying the pupils on a little further than the Entrance Standard. But whatever increase of expenditure may be called for, will be more than repaid in the lasting results that will ensue. For the present, they cannot be estimated from a pecuniary point

of view. If that mode of valuing the benefit of any improvement introduced by the British Government into this country had been applied from the beginning of their connection with us, to this day there would have been no education at all for any section of the Indian population. It is enough that we are able to see the right thing to be done at the right moment, leaving it to the justice, the liberality, and the foresight of the British nation to provide the means for doing it.

At the conclusion of the reading of the Paper—

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE remarked that much of his time in India had been spent among the Mahomedans, and he must congratulate the writer on the paper which had just been read. In most parts of India, the Mahomedan races still possessed vitality; the lower orders were still military, while the upper distinguished themselves in politics or literature. Wherever administrative capacity and energy were required, there would Mahomedans be found, now as ever. At Hyderabad, where he (the speaker) had spent the last few months, there were Mahomedan administrators and statesmen, one of whom, Sir Salar Jung, had a repute which might justly be a source of pride to his Mahomedan compatriots and co-religionists. Even in Bengal, though the climate and the associations were against them, we might still hope that the Mahomedans would soon emulate their brethren elsewhere.

THE REVD. J. LONG said that one great problem regarding the Mahomedans had been overlooked. Our policy had ruled that they were to be educated like the Hindus through the medium of the English language. The question had been fully discussed by him last year with some of the leading Mahomedans at Moorshedabad. There was no doubt that the Mahomedans had not the same aptitude and the same facilities for acquiring a knowledge of English as the Hindus possessed. He hoped we should not commit the same mistake in this country which had been committed with regard to Ireland, and from which England was now suffering. On the conquest of Ireland we had ruled that no Irishman should hold office unless he knew English, and the millions were consigned to ignorance with its consequent degradation. Such a policy was partial and unjust. Much knowledge might doubtless be communicated through the medium of the vernacular, as had been shown in the North-West Provinces, and he thought the present system of giving an almost exclusive preference to the English language was prejudicial to the interests of the country.

MOULVIE ABDOOL LUTEEF replied that the system of imparting information regarding the Western Sciences through the means of translations had already been tried in Bengal and had proved a failure.

MOULVIE OBYDOOLLAH testified to the difficulty which was experienced by Mahomedans in the acquirement of the English language. He recommended the more general use of Arabic, as Oordoo did not possess a sufficiently copious vocabulary for the expression of metaphysical and scientific terms.

Baboo Peary Chand Mittra wished to know whether any steps were being taken for the education of Mahomedan women. The efforts that were being made in the cause of female education among the Hindus were well known, and he should like to hear if there was any similar movement among the Mahomedans.

Dr. Best pressed the question.

Dr. Farquhar asked if any gentleman present would inform the Meeting as to the existence of any Mahomedan literature suited for their women, or whether it was the case that the books of general reading were seldom fit to be put into the hands of the female portion of the community.

In reply to these questions, Moulvie Abdool Hukeem (who spoke in Cordoo) stated that female education was not unknown among the Mahomedans, so as to require any stimulus or encouragement from without. The education of their women went hand in hand with the promulgation of their religion. The first Mahomedan nation, the Arabs, had recognised its importance in the very origin of their society, and their women, as a rule, were well read in all the sciences and arts of the day, particularly in literature and poetry. Their Holy Prophet enjoined the education of women equally with that of men. His own wives and daughters were well educated; some of them were famous poetesses, and their compositions were extant at the present day. Similarly the wives and daughters of the Caliphs of Bagdad and Damascus as well as of Cordova were well educated. And with the spread of the Mahomedan religion from almost one end of the civilized world to the other, female education had been introduced into India, Persia, and other countries. The writings of many of the Begums and Princesses of Delhi were not yet extinct. Even to the present day the respectable portion of the Mahomedan community continued to educate their women. Under these circumstances, the speaker deprecated the necessity for any interference in the matter from without. The progress of education among the male portion of the community would, he argued, be necessarily accompanied by a similar progress among the female. None perhaps had the education of women more at heart, or were more convinced of its advantages, than were the Mahomedans. They well understood how children derived their first ideas and habits from their mothers, and how necessary, therefore, it was to provide that they were not spoilt in their very infancy. They were able, moreover, to appreciate the great assistance which an educated woman might render to her husband in the management of his household. But there was one thing which the Mahomedans could never be expected to do; they could not, like other nations, send their daughters to schools or colleges. They were bound by their religion to keep their women in seclusion, and they must conform to this injunction of their religion in the same way as other nations were bound by their respective creeds.

Dr. Chuckerbutty asked if any Mahomedan families had availed themselves of the *zenana* agency. It was well known that many Hindu gentlemen entertained the same objection to their daughters going out to school, but *zenana* education had made great progress during the last twenty years.

Dr. Farquhar pressed for a reply to his inquiry regarding suitable Oordoo books for women.

Dr. Ewart thought the discussion was rather deviating from the subject which was before the meeting.

Baboo Monmohun Ghose criticised the system of teaching Oriental languages. He thought that Sanscrit and the European languages were much easier to learn than Arabic, because they were taught more scientifically. He urged that the Universities should do more to promote the study of the Oriental classics.

The President (The Hon'ble Justice J. B. Phear) in conclusion remarked that the subject was one of great importance, and the Association ought to be grateful to the writer for bringing it forward. It was observable, with regard to the Minute of Warren Hastings which had been read, that it related to a condition of society which was mainly Mahomedan. Since that time it was the fact that Mahomedan gentlemen had fallen from the position in the community which they then held, mainly in consequence of having been surpassed in education and professional acquirements by their Hindu compatriots. It ought never to be forgotten that the Mahomedan population was lately predominant in this country, and the recollection of their former power in connection with their present want of social importance was liable to engender feelings not of the most desirable nature. The subject was therefore of the highest political importance. We had not long ago experienced that the disaffection of the Mahomedans may be a serious evil, and he thought, therefore, that no opportunities should be lost of conciliating them by a spirit of fairness and justice, and of giving them the means of acquiring a good English education, without which they could have no chance of catching up their more successful rivals.

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